

# Management Services

A resource for New England condominium associations seeking professional management services.

2020/2021



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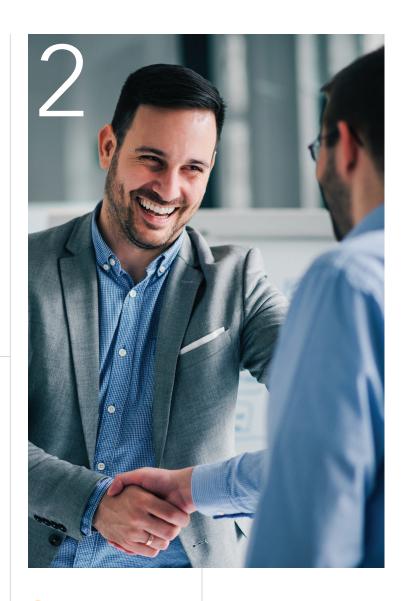
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# GUIDE TO Management Services CONTENTS 2 0 2 0 / 2 0 2 1

# **FINDING PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MANAGERS**

A Guide for New England Condominium Association Boards

here are a variety of reasons a board might be looking for professional management. Owners assuming control of a newly created community association may decide they need professional management; self-managed associations may make the same decision; and some boards may have decided to replace their current manager. This guide doesn't cover all aspects of the manager-selection process, but the general advice and resources it provides will assist boards in the process of finding professional management services best able to meet their community's needs.



THE MANAGEMENT **RELATIONSHIP** Details are Important

[by Nena Groskind]

Management Services **Directory** 

# THE MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP

Details are Important

[by Nena Groskind]

Finding the "right" manager requires a thoughtful, organized selection process that considers the experience, skills, personality and management style required to create a "good match" for the community. The approach we outline here reflects the cumulative advice industry experts have offered in a variety of *Condo Media* articles over the years.



PROCEED CAREFULLY. This applies to associations seeking a manager for the first time, but it is aimed particularly at those replacing an existing manager. Before taking that step, you should consider whether replacement is necessary. You don't want to continue a management relationship that isn't working, but there are costs involved in replacing a manager, beginning with the time and effort required to find another one. There will also be a learning curve required for a new manager to learn your association's operations and the personalities of board members and unit owners.

Also, whatever its faults, or perceived faults, your existing company has acquired some institutional knowledge that a new company won't have, at least, not right away. The longer the relationship, the more valuable that knowledge is, and the more your association will feel its loss. This doesn't mean tenure is more important than service quality, but it does mean you should avoid a "rush to judgment." If you decide that replacement is necessary, make sure you understand why the existing relationship didn't work; otherwise you risk repeating the same problems with the new company.



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the manager to do. You should answer this question before beginning your search, and you should outline the requirements you identify in a request for proposals (RFP) you use to solicit bids from potential candidates. Boards need to be clear about what they want, and managers need to be equally clear about what they are able and willing to do for the community.

FIND A GOOD MATCH. Most experienced professional managers and most reputable management companies will be able to provide the services you want; the board's challenge will be finding a company or a manager that is a good match for the community. Key considerations include:

• The community's location and physical structure. You want a manager who has experience working with a community like yours. The manager of a townhouse spread over 200 acres in the suburbs needs to know a lot more about grounds maintenance and landscaping and a lot less about facilities management than the downtown high-rise with three elevators and a complex HVAC system. An over-55 community will likely

## Community Association Management Credentials

A COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION operates as a government, a community, and a business, making it a truly specialized type of organization. Leading America's more than 349,000 community associations are 2.5 million volunteers - homeowners who dedicate their free time to serve on boards and committees.

As a board member, trustee, or volunteer leader working with your association, you have fiduciary responsibilities which compel you to make decisions that can have profound financial and social impact on you and your neighbors. Receiving professional and accurate advice or guidance on issues such as reserves, maintenance, insurance, budgets, governance, contracts, the law, and rules can make the difference between prosperity and distress.



To help ensure that you have the expert guidance you need to manage your community's assets most effectively, look for professionals with the designations and certifications from Community Associations Institute (CAI) and Community Association Manager – International Certification Board (CAM-ICB).

Credentials help ensure that managers have the knowledge, experience, and integrity to provide the best possible service to your association. Managers that hold a CAI designation or CAM-ICB certification have made a substantial commitment and investment in their education, their career, and your community's welfare.

#### How to find a Credentialed Professional

- Visit the Directory of Credentialed Professionals at www.caionline.org or www.camicb.org to search for credentialed managers in your area.
- Call CAI at (888) 224-4321 (M-F, 9-6:00 ET) and ask our customer care specialists to assist you in a search.
- During the hiring process, ask candidates if they hold a professional credential.
- Look for the credential letters (CMCA, AMS, PCAM) behind the names of professional managers.
- Look for an AAMC when selecting a management company.

Download a FREE copy of Your Community Deserves the Best Professionals brochure at www.caine.org

#### **Credentials for Community Association Managers**

#### **CERTIFIED MANAGER OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS (CMCA)**

The CMCA certification provides standards for association management and is the only worldwide certification program designed exclusively for community association managers.

#### **ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST (AMS)**

The AMS designation recognizes ongoing professional development and industry expertise for community managers.

#### PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGER (PCAM)

The PCAM designation is the highest professional recognition available worldwide to those who specialize in community association management.

## The Management Relationship

A less experienced manager may charge less, but you won't see much of a savings if your legal and accounting bills skyrocket because the manager calls the association attorney and accountant repeatedly for assistance handling routine matters a more experienced company may be able to handle on its own.

have different management needs and require a different management style than a community composed largely of first-time owners and young families. A vacation-home community can't be managed like a community in which residents live full-time.

- The age and stage of the community. An older property will want a manager with experience overseeing major renovations and repairs; for a new development, experience managing the transition to owner control and other start-up issues will be more important.
- The composition of the board. A board that is inclined to micromanage will not do well with managers who resist micro-management. A key question for the board: Do you want a manager who takes orders or do you want one who provides guidance and leadership?



#### THE MANAGEMENT FEE IS IMPORTANT -**BUT NOT ALL-**

**IMPORTANT.** You get what you pay for and, equally important, you don't get what you don't pay for. If one company quotes a significantly lower fee than another, you want to know why. Are the two companies providing the same services? Are they providing the same quality of service (a different question entirely)? Do they have comparable

staffing and back-office support? Will the managers spend the same amount of time focusing on your property?

A company whose portfolio managers are responsible for 10 properties will have less time for you - and probably charge less - than the company whose managers handle fewer properties.

Do the managers have comparable experience? A less experienced manager may charge less, but you won't see much of a savings if your legal and accounting bills skyrocket because the manager calls the association attorney and accountant repeatedly for assistance handling routine matters a more experienced company may be able to handle on its own. The more experienced manager may be able to recommend cost-saving strategies and solutions that will more than off-set the higher management fee. You don't want to pay for services and expertise you don't need, but you want to be sure that the management company you select is able to provide the services and the service quality that you expect.



#### SIZE ISN'T THE **DETERMINING ISSUE.**

Large companies and small ones have potential advantages that may be more or less important to different communities. Larger companies with multiple association clients may be able to use their leverage to negotiate better deals with outside vendors, while small companies may offer more personalized service. The key question

is not whether a company is big or small, but whether its size and structure match your association's needs. A company's reputation, experience, philosophy and management style, far more than its size, should guide your selection.



#### A CONTRACT IS **ESSENTIAL.** Most disputes between

managers and boards result from uncertainty about what the board expects and what the manager has agreed to do. The contract should leave no room for those questions. It should state clearly, with as much detail as possible, the services the company will provide and how it will be compensated for them. Association attorneys suggest attaching the RFP the company submitted during the bidding process. They also suggest including a termination clause specifying the conditions under which a contract can be terminated if things don't work out.



■ NENA GROSKIND IS PRESIDENT OF ECONTENTPLUS, PROVIDING **EDITORIAL CONTENT FOR** WEBSITES, PRINT AND ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTERS AND MAGAZINES

# INTERVIEWING PROSPECTIVE MANAGERS

The information managers and management companies submit in response to your requests for proposals (RFPs) will describe the services they will provide and the compensation they will receive for their work. The interview process should drill down below the surface of the RFPs to explore not only what prospective managers will do, but how they will do it. We've identified some of the questions that will elicit the detail and depth you need from the managers and management company representatives you interview.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE MANAGER **ASSIGNED TO YOUR PROPERTY SPEND IN** YOUR COMMUNITY? This is a critical question for a portfolio manager responsible for multiple properties, because it will determine how much (or how little)

personal attention you should reasonably expect.

WHAT SERVICES ARE INCLUDED IN THE BASE FEE AND WHAT SERVICES ARE CONSIDERED "NON-RECURRING" OR "NON-ROUTINE," FOR WHICH THE **ASSOCIATION WILL BE BILLED SEPARATELY?** 

Examples of non-routine services would include oversight of a major construction project and litigation management. You want to know how much a manager will charge for work outside the scope of the manager's defined duties.

WHAT EXPERIENCE DO THE MANAGERS HAVE? WHAT TRAINING HAVE THEY HAD AND WHAT CONTINUING TRAINING DO THEY RECEIVE? WHAT PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS HAVE THEY EARNED?

You want to be sure the manager or management company you select has the experience and skills necessary to do what the contract requires. While professional designations don't necessarily reflect a manager's skills or expertise, they do indicate a level of professional commitment that you want a manager or a management company to have.

WHAT IS THEIR POLICY ON RESPONDING TO EMAILS AND PHONE MESSAGES? It isn't reasonable to expect instant replies, but you want a manager for whom communication – with board members and owners - is a priority.

WHAT BACK-OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT **DOES THE MANAGER HAVE?** The larger your community, the more important this will be.

WHAT VENDORS DOES THE MANAGER OR **MANAGEMENT COMPANY USE?** You want a manager who has a long list of trusted vendors who will respond quickly to requests for service.



HOW WILL THE MANAGER HANDLE A SPECIFIC PROBLEM OR ISSUE THE ASSOCIATION IS CUR-**RENTLY CONFRONTING OR HAS CONFRONTED IN** THE PAST? This will give you a general sense of the management style and whether it is a good fit for your board and your community.

HOW DOES THE MANAGER DEAL WITH DISPUTES - BETWEEN THE BOARD AND UNIT OWNERS AND BETWEEN OWNERS? Unless your community is completely dispute-free (in which case, we'd like to live there, too) you want a manager who has the experience and skills to manage conflicts when they arise.

WHAT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES DOES THE MANAGER PERCEIVE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

You are looking for honesty and insights, not flattery. You want to select a manager you can trust to tell you what you need to know, not what you want to hear.

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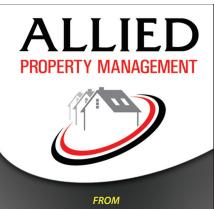
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Assessments collected from homeowners to fund many essential association obligations, including professional management services, utilities, security, insurance, common area maintenance, landscaping, capital improvement projects, and amenities like pools and club houses.

\*According to the 2019-2020 National and State Statistical Review published by CAI.



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We specialize in condominium and homeowner association management. With over 30 years of growth, we actively manage 350 associations throughout all of New England. Our 150 property managers, accountants, office support, and maintenance technicians are focused only on our condominium and homeowner association portfolio.

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We work closely with clients to enhance property values and quality of life. We develop and manage budgets for the present and future needs of your property. Our goal is to help foster a sense of community and pride for properties. Our clients trust us based on financial transparency and frequent communication.

#### THE HOFELLER **COMPANY, INC**

8 ALTON PL. • STE. 3 **BROOKLINE, MA 02446** 617-734-8500 X111 • FAX: 617-738-9894 **EHOFELLER@HOFELLER.COM** WWW.HOFELLER.COM

Founded in 1987, we work with condominium associations that expect smart, honest, responsive service. Our dedication to quality service and the enhancement of our client's property is our primary goal. Our staff is trained to be proactive so you'll see the results. Let the THC team demonstrate to you what quality management feels like.

## J A WOOD

594 MARRETT RD. • STE. 16 LEXINGTON, MA 02421 781-860-0605 WWW.JAWOODMANAGEMENT.COM

We are a Lexington-based office managing over 3,000 condo units in the greater Boston area. With a professional staff, we attribute our growth to our property owner's strong support and appreciation for our services. Our team provides owners exemplary property management services and great communities for our residents.

#### **MALONEY** PROPERTIES, INC.

27 MICA LANE WELLESLEY, MA 02481 781-943-0200

WWW.MALONEYPROPERTIES.COM

Maloney has been creating first class communities since 1981. We manage over 11,000 units of mixed-use, market rate, and affordable housing in more than 90 communities across New England. We provide exceptional real estate services delivered with expertise, flexibility and integrity to help our clients create happy homes and thriving communities. Let's talk about how we can help you today.

# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

18 WATERHOUSE RD. BOURNE, MA

160 OLD DERBY ST. • STE. 112 HINGHAM, MA 800-696-9449 WWW.MERCANTILEPROPERTY.COM

Our track record of exceptional service is shown through our nationally certified managers and professional team who work to ensure our client's communities are well-managed, financially sound, and a place owners are proud to live and work. We provide personalized and innovative services offering the latest in reporting, tracking, and communication. Visit our website.

## NORTH POINT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

ANDOVER, MA MEREDITH AND NASHUA, NH TOLL FREE: 877-423-5050 **GMACKENZIE@** 

NORTHPOINTMANAGEMENT.COM WWW.NORTHPOINTMANAGEMENT.COM

At North Point Property Management, we've raised the bar to include highly credentialed and experienced managers, innovative communication tools, and cost-saving solutions for our client communities' success.



#### **PARADIGM** PARTNERS, INC

470 WASHINGTON ST. • STE. 25 P.O. BOX 306 NORWOOD, MA 02062 617-349-1100 • FAX: 617-349-1111 INFO@PARADIGMPARTNER.COM WWW.PARADIGMPARTNER.COM

Our firm is geared towards discriminating owners who want professional hands-on service and out-of-the-box thinking. Together, founding partners, Dick Williams, CPM, and Adam Williams, CMCA, assist condominium owners in meeting the increasingly demanding needs of the real property that they own in common.

#### THE PARK PLACE **MANAGEMEN**1 COMPANY

MARIAN SERVIDIO, CMCA, AMS 41 COMMERCE AVE. • STE. 4 SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT 05403 802-860-5050 • FAX: 802-862-4438 MARIAN@PPMVT.COM WWW.PPMVT.COM

Long standing relationships verify our top quality management. Our extensive scope of services and varied vendor pool provide value and excellent service for our clientele. Call on us for help with the smallest detail. We enhance our skills by attending educational seminars and staying current with licensing requirements of CAI.

#### **PHOENIX COMPANY, INC.**

JUD GOODNOW EXT. 222 **DEBRA R JEAN EXT. 213 ADAM POLLETTA EXT. 227** 650 LINCOLN ST. WORCESTER, MA 01605 508-856-7000 • FAX: 508-856-7300 JUD@PCI-1.NET DEBRA@PCI-1.NET ADAM@PCI-1.NET WWW.PCI-1.NET

We pride ourselves on being attentive to our client needs and have focused on being recognized as industry professionals in community management. We specialize in residential condominium properties with 75 combined years of management experience. Phoenix Company is professionally trained and dedicated to protecting and enhancing your investment.

Percent of new housing built for sale is in a community association. \*According to the 2019-2020 National and State Statistical Review published by CAI.

#### PIONEER PROPERT MANAGEMENT INC

146 FOREST ST. FRANKLIN, MA 02038 508-528-9242 • FAX: 508-541-6113 PIONEER5@EARTHLINK.NET

We are a full-service management company providing a wide range of homeowner association services. Our certified professional Community Association Managers, accountants, and office staffs are here to guarantee a professional and friendly experience with us. We dedicatedly maintain long-lasting relationships, ensuring the best customer service and professional guidance.

#### PREMIER PROPERTY SOLUTIONS, LLC

PATRICK COLBERT 190 HIGH ST. • 6TH FLOOR BOSTON, MA 02110 617-345-0045 WWW.PREMIERPROPERTYMA.COM

We are committed to excellence in every aspect of our pro-active property management services. "Take a good look at a company that doesn't overlook anything."

#### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OF ANDOVER, LLC

JAMES TOSCANO, PCAM 978-683-4101 • FAX: 978-686-4664 INFO@PMANDOVER.COM WWW.PMANDOVER.COM

Founded in 1986, we specialize in the management and maintenance needs of condominium communities. Our focused local allows our employees to confidently provide full support in all managerial aspects including vendors we've established longstanding relationships with. Through strong communication, persistence, and integrity we treat your home as our own.

39 BRIGHTON AVE. BOSTON, MA 02134 617-782-3400 • FAX: 617-782-1151 RONALD@R-BROWNPARTNERS.COM

Since 1985, R Brown Partners has focused on the management needs of condominium trustees and owners. R Brown Partners primarily manages mid-rise, high-end condominiums in Brookline and the surrounding areas. Our reputation for personalized, professional management service is documented and can be tailored to fit your condominium's needs.



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OF ANDOVER

Offering full

**Property Management** Services to the Merrimack Valley area for over 33 years!

**Contact us today** to see how we can help your association.

info@pmandover.com

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#### **SALISBURY** MANAGEMENT, INC.

120 SHREWSBURY ST. BOYLSTON, MA 01505 508-869-0764 • FAX: 508-869-0664 WWW.SALISBURYMANAGEMENT.COM

Come benefit from over 30 years of expertise! We have specialized in Community Association Management since 1987, combining cutting edge technology with old-fashioned customer service. We work in Real Estate Management, Real Estate Brokerage, and Contracting & Construction. Join us and we will respond to your needs 24/7.

#### **SUTTON MANAGEMENT** COMPANY, INC.

RICK STERN, MBA 23 CENTRAL ST. ANDOVER, MA 01810 978-689-9994 RSTERN@SUTTONMANAGEMENT.COM WWW.SUTTONMANAGEMENT.COM

We are a locally-owned and operated Property Management company serving Southern New Hampshire and the Merrimack Valley for 27 years. We offer "world class" expertise with "hands-on" assistance around the clock. With a portfolio of both older, converted condominiums and modern condos, we can handle the unique challenges of your property.

#### THAYER & ASSOCIATES, INC., AMO

DOUGLAS G. THAYER, CPM 1812 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. P.O. BOX 400196 CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140 617-354-6480 • FAX: 617-354-7854 MOREINFO@THAYERASSOCIATES.COM WWW.THAYERASSOCIATES.COM

We maintain long-term relationships with clients; some existing for 10, 15, and even 20+ years. Our history of demonstrates our ability to provide quality services including offer consulting, brokerage, construction and financial services to associations. We handle over 65 client properties and approximately 6,500 units throughout Massachusetts.

25-27%

of U.S. population in community associations.

\*According to the 2019-2020 National and State Statistical Review published by CAI.





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Revolutionizing Property Management One Association At a Time

#### **Balance :: Respect :: Innovation :: Growth :: Sustainability**





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